

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are currently pending in this application. Claim 13-21 have been cancelled without prejudice. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the above claim amendments and the following remarks.

The Examiner objected to the drawings for not containing every feature recited in claim 4. Applicants have amended claim 4 to recite first and second grip tabs having interior edge that contact a valve body at substantially a common point as illustrated at least in FIG. 1, and described in paragraph [0029] of the originally filed application. Applicants therefore request that this objection be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Applicants have cancelled claim 21 without prejudice so that this rejection is moot.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0050604 or US Patent 7,101,353 to Lui et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 recites a tearable hemostasis valve comprised in part by a snap-fit arrangement coupled to a distal end of the valve body, wherein the snap-fit arrangement is adapted to couple onto an outer surface of an annular hub of a proximal end of a tubular medical device, wherein said snap-fit arrangement comprises a cavity disposed in said valve body; and an annular sidewall defining an opening in communication with said cavity, wherein a diameter of said opening is less than a diameter of said cavity. (Underlining added for emphasis only). Applicant respectfully submits that Lui et al. do not disclose or suggest the recited claim elements.

The examiner alleges that FIG. 35 of Liu et al. includes a snap fit arrangement coupled to a distal end of the valve body that couples onto an annular hub of a tubular medical device as recited in claim 1. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The valve of Liu et al. includes an interfacing region, typically located at the distal end of the valve assembly which is configured to permit the valve to be coupled or attached to a tubular medical device such as a sheath. However, Lui et al. do not disclose a snap-fit arrangement comprising a cavity disposed in said valve body; and an

PATENT

annular sidewall defining an opening in communication with said cavity, wherein a diameter of said opening is less than a diameter of said cavity as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is novel and unobvious over Lui et al. and is therefore allowable. Applicant further submits that claims 2-3 that depend from claim 1 are allowable as is claim 1 and for additional limitations recited therein.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 4-12 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,083,207 to Heck. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 recites a tearable hemostasis valve comprised in part by a snap-fit arrangement coupled to a distal end of the valve body, wherein the snap-fit arrangement is adapted to couple onto an outer surface of an annular hub of a proximal end of a tubular medical device, wherein said snap-fit arrangement comprises a cavity disposed in said valve body; and an annular sidewall defining an opening in communication with said cavity, wherein a diameter of said opening is less than a diameter of said cavity. (Underlining added for emphasis only). Applicant respectfully submits that Heck does not disclose or suggest the recited claim elements.

Rather, the hemostasis valve of Heck as illustrated in FIGS. 1-5 includes a rectangular shaped adapter system by which a splittable sheath can be secured to the valve. This adapter system of Heck includes a pair of sides which when brought together create a structure which holds the T-shaped top of the splittable sheath. (Heck, col. 8, lines 45-50). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Heck does not disclose a valve body having a snap-fit arrangement comprising a cavity disposed in said valve body and an annular sidewall defining an opening in communication with said cavity, as recited in claim 1 but rather utilizes a rectangular opening in its adapter system. Applicants therefore submit that claim 1 is novel and non-obvious over Heck and is allowable. Applicants further submit that claims 2-3 that depend from claim 1 are allowable as is claim 1 and for additional limitations recited therein.

Further, independent claim 4 recites a tearable hemostasis valve, comprised in part by first and second grip tabs attached to a valve body wherein an interior edge of each of the first and second grip tabs contact a valve body at substantially a common

PATENT

point. The recited valve further includes a score line disposed on said valve body and extending inwardly from the common point toward a longitudinal axis of the valve body. Applicants submit that Heck does not disclose or suggest the recited claim elements.

Rather, the valve of Heck includes a valve separation system having wing sections and a pivot pin and spring as shown in FIG. 5. The spring has a pair of extension arms each of which extend outward from the spring and rest against the inside surfaces of each wing section. The spring is maintained on a pivot pin under tension so that these arms force the wing sections apart closing the partitioned hemostasis valve housing as shown in FIGS. 1 and 4. Inward pressure on the wing sections forces the respective body sections of the valve to pivot around the pivot pin to an open position. (Heck, col. 6, line 63 – col. 7, line 37).

Thus, the valve of Heck does not include grip tabs having an interior edge that contact the valve body at substantially a common point as recited in claim 4. Rather, the valve separating system of Heck takes the general shape of a clothes pin, as shown in FIGS. 3, 4 and 5. Moreover Heck does not disclose or suggest a score line disposed on said valve body and extending inwardly from the common point where the grip tabs are attached to the valve body as recited in claim 4. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is novel and non-obvious over Heck and is therefore allowable. Applicants further submit that claims 5-12 that depend from claim 4 are allowable as is claim 4 and for additional limitations recited therein.

In light of the above claim amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice of allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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Page 7 of 7

Docket No. 11533US.00